

Testimony on Bill 15, CD2 FD1-Ozawa

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Dear Chairman Martin and councilmembers,

I am writing to you to state my opposition of Bill 15, CD2 FD1 proposed by Councilman Ozawa. I am currently a student-athlete pursuing an environmental studies major and have volunteered multiple times with the Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center.

It is my current understanding that the proposed draft of FD1 by Councilman Ozawa would remove funding for the opportunity to purchase and therefore protect Kānewai Spring. I recommend that this proposal be re-examined in order to preserve this incredibly special place.

I had the privilege of being raised in Niu Valley for 18 years, but was only introduced to Kānewai Spring last year. Throughout my childhood, I operated under a consensus that East Honolulu's once thriving fisheries and freshwater sources were gone without a trace. However, while researching for a project I discovered a gem: Kānewai.

For 18 years I lived less than a mile away from this amazing resource without knowing it was there. I felt compelled to become involved in learning more about Kānewai Spring and Kalauha'iha'i fishpond.

Kānewai Spring deserves funding because this resource is a reflection of the community itself. Kānewai Spring is one of the last connecting strings to East Honolulu's rich history. This innate feature does not deserve to be swallowed by private development. The understanding is simple: once an innate resource like Kānewai Spring is gone, it cannot be rebuilt or restored. Without funding, the ability to purchase and thus protect Kānewai Spring from desolation will be greatly hindered.

Throughout the past few years, the Maunalua Fishpond Heritage Center has done amazing work with the community. Organizations like the YMCA Wai-Kahala, Kaiser High School, Maryknoll School, Kaneohe Marine Corps Base and more, have stepped up to aid in the restorative efforts. What I have come to realize is that the volunteering process is a two way street; as the health of Kānewai Spring grows, the bounty of communal knowledge rises with it.

At Kānewai Spring, people have the opportunity to learn more about the history of where they live. I want the next generation to grow up with the knowledge of Kānewai Spring and the

opportunity to learn from this unique resource. I'm grateful for the experiences I've had at the spring but, I wish I could have started my education from a younger age. Cutting the funding to preserve this critical source of fresh water is taking away opportunities from the next generation of leaders in Hawai'i.

So I ask you, where do you allocate the value of this place? To the entirety of a community or the few who will privately benefit from Kānewai Spring?

Spring water at Kānewai should be for the public to learn and use as a resource, not for private ownership. Please keep the clean Water funding in the budget for Kānewai Spring to prevent that.